

and therefore, kindly request clarification from the Examiner with regards to the objection to the specification.

Further, the Examiner has indicated that the listing of references in the specification is not a proper Information Disclosure Statement. Again, however, Applicants fail to see any listing of references in the specification. Therefore, Applicants kindly request clarification from the Examiner as to which references are being referred.

The Examiner has objected to the claims because he has indicated that the claims are crowded too closely together, making reading difficult. Further, the Examiner has indicated that substitute claims with lines one and on-half or double spaced on good quality paper are required. However, Applicants note that the claims were originally filed as double-spaced.

Claim Rejections:

Claims 1, 4 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yusuke Hamashima (JP 2002-137673). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In particular, Applicants submit that JP '673 does not disclose a preforming step, or the use of two different punch rollers or punches. Claim 1 is directed to a method of working a recessed portion in a headrest stay formed of a pipe. The method comprises preforming a recess, and then final forming the recess, so as to form a recessed portion. These two steps of preforming and final forming are performed by two different punch rollers, i.e. a first punch roller and a second punch roller. The first punch roller has a rounded portion on its outer peripheral portion, while the second punch roller has a punch portion on its outer periphery portion.

JP '673 fails to teach or suggest this two step process of preforming and final forming with two punch rollers each having a distinctive outer periphery portion.

In the rejection, the Examiner relies on punch roller 76 for both the first and second punch rollers. According to the Abstract and Fig. 3, the stay 10 of the headrest is placed in the support table 80 having the die holder 84 and die 86. The recessed portions 14a, 16a are then formed by the punch rollers 76. However, Applicants respectfully submit that there is no disclosure or suggestion of having two steps for forming the recessed portions, wherein a recess is preformed by a first punch roller and then finally formed by a second punch roller.

This two step method of the present invention has many advantages. For instance, no chips are produced during cutting work. Also, the recessed portion is strong without having to enlarge the wall thickness of the pipe. Still further, burrs are not produced due to this novel method. (See paragraphs [0075-0079] of the published application.)

Applicants respectfully submit that since JP '673 fails to disclose or suggest a method which includes preforming with a first punch roller having a rounded portion, and then final forming with a second punch roller having a punch portion, JP '673 fails to anticipate claim 1.

Claim 4 is directed to a method of working a recessed portion in a headrest stay formed of pipe. The method comprises preforming the recessed portion by pressing a punch against a stay portion while rotating the punch, and then forming the recessed portion by press working a press punch. Thus, claim 4 is also directed to forming a recessed portion in two steps, i.e. preforming with a punch, followed by press working with a press punch.

This aspect of the present invention is illustrated at Figs. 17-22. For example, a punch 204 rotates and presses a dent 220 into the headrest stay. Thereafter, a press punch 208 forms the recessed portion 202 of the final shape by subjecting the dent 220 by press working. (See paragraphs [0083-0091] of the published application.)

JP '673 fails to disclose such a two-step method for making a recessed portion. JP '673 merely discloses the rollers 76, and there is no teaching or suggestion that a preforming step precedes a final forming step, utilizing two different structures (e.g. a punch and a press punch). Therefore, JP '673 does not anticipate claim 4.

Claim 5 is directed to a method of working a recessed portion in a headrest stay which is provided in a stay portion of the headrest stay. A preform step is performed by pressing a disk-shaped punch against the stay portion, then a holder cover is fitted on a holder in which the headrest stay is set, and then the recessed portion is formed by press working a press punch.

Thus, similar to the other claims, a preform step precedes the step of forming the recessed portion, and these two steps are performed using two different elements, i.e. a disk-shaped punch and a press punch. JP '673 fails to disclose this novel method of the invention. Thus, JP '673 fails to anticipate claim 5.

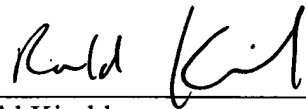
Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Request for Reconsideration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 10/626,739

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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